

Bill supporting three transit measures to go before council

By Dena Levitz
Examiner Staff Writer

Montgomery County Council members want to go on record supporting the proposed Purple Line, Corridor Cities Transitway and a bill in the U.S. House that would provide \$1.5 billion in federal funds to the region for Metro upgrades.

That's why at Tuesday's meeting, newly selected Council Vice President Mike Knapp and returning Council Member Nancy Floreen introduced a bill that, if passed next week, will advocate for each of the three major transportation initiatives.

Knapp said that although the council has, to an extent, endorsed the projects individually, he wanted the county's main governing body to send a strong message on all three, particularly now that four new members are in place.

"Given the focus on transportation that each of us expressed in our recent political campaigns and the regional focus on transportation, it's crucial for this council to get on record early on saying that we'll fight for these improvements," he said during Tuesday's meeting.

Last month, Prince George's officials made the same stride when they voiced formal support for the transportation initiatives. According to Knapp, it's a step he wishes other jurisdictions would take as well to make these pressing goals a reality.

The Purple Line, or Bi-County Transitway, is a proposed 14-mile transit line from Bethesda to New Carrollton that also would serve Chevy Chase, Silver Spring, Langley Park and Riverdale, among other cities. Funding still is a major hurdle, but State Highway Administration leaders said they intend to finish an environmental impact statement by the middle of next year for the Bi-County Transitway as well as the Corridor Cities Transitway.

The CCT would be a 13.5-mile transit line between Shady Grove and Clarksburg to ease traffic flow in the upper portion of Montgomery County.

House Resolution 3496 would provide \$1.5 billion of federal aid for Metro. Maryland, Virginia and D.C. collectively would also be required to match the \$1.5 billion amount.

dlevitz@denver.com